

In the claims:

1. (currently amended) Apparatus for use by a station in a wireless communications environment wherein multiple channels are available for communication, and wherein the station is associated with an access point, comprising:

a receiver operable to receive Announce messages from access points, the Announce messages being indicative of access point presence, ~~and~~ protocol capability, and current transmission power attenuation relative to maximum possible transmission power;

circuitry operable to periodically attempt to select at least one access point from which an Announce message was received, the selection based at least in-part on an indication that the selected access point will provide better service than the access point with which the station is currently associated, and based at least in-part on the transmission power attenuation;

a transmitter operable to send Bid messages to the selected access point to indicate that the station desires to communicate in the wireless communications environment via the access point; and

circuitry operable in response to an Accept message from the selected access point to reconfigure the station to communicate via the selected access point, the Accept message indicating that the access point will allow the station to communicate in the wireless communications environment via the selected access point.

2. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:

circuitry operable to generate a registration request message for transmission to the selected access point to indicate that the station desires to communicate in the wireless communications environment via the selected access point using a particular protocol;

circuitry operable to receive and process a registration acknowledge message from the selected access point in response to the Registration Request message, the registration acknowledge message indicating that the selected access point understands that the station will communicate in the wireless communications environment using the particular protocol.

3. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the selection circuitry is operable to select the access point ~~is~~ likely to provide the highest data rate.